DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 193 605 CS 005 679

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TITLE Promising PCRP Practices for Classroom Use.
INSTITUTION Pennsylvania State Dept. of Education, Harrisburg. Bureau of Curriculum Services.
PUB DATE Aug 80
NOTE 64p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Communication Skills; Elementary Secondary Education; *Learning Activities; *Reading Instruction; Teaching Guides; *Teaching Methods; *Writing Instruction

ABSTRACT

The 27 teaching ideas and activities presented in this booklet were developed by Pennsylvania teachers to address four critical experiences in reading and communication arts: responding to literature; sustained silent reading of self-selected books; composing, both orally and in writing; and investigating and mastering language patterns. The entry for each activity includes the following information: (1) the activity's name, (2) the critical experience it addresses, (3) expected student outcomes, (4) number of students who can participate, (5) intended grade level, (6) materials needed, (7) amount of instructional time needed by the teacher, (8) amount of student independent activity time needed, (9) a description of the activity, and (10) additional suggestions for the activity's implementation. (FL)

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PROMISING PCRP PRACTICES FOR CLASSROOM USE

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Introduction

The Comprehensive Reading Communication Arts Plan (PCRP) shares two basic and interacting goals for Reading/Communication Arts instruction:

1. To advance student competence in reading and listening and in oral and written expression.
2. To nurture positive attitudes toward reading and the effective use of language.

PRCP sets forth an Action Plan involving four critical experiences in Reading/Communication Arts. These critical experiences are:

1. Responding to Literature (heard, read, visualized or dramatized).
2. Sustained Silent Reading of Self-Selected Books.
3. Composing: Oral and Written.
4. Investigating and Mastering Language Patterns: Sounds/Spelling, Syntax and Meanings.

Educators throughout Pennsylvania have developed activities that address these four critical experiences. Promising PCRP Practices for Classroom Use describes some of these activities. When a similar idea/activity was contributed by a number of people a composite was developed to describe the activity. Credit is given to each contributor.

The following Goals of Quality Education are addressed in the activities described in this publication: Communication Skills, Self-Esteem, Analytical Thinking, Understanding Others, Arts and Humanities and Environment.

Grade level classifications are as follows: Primary (K-3), Intermediate (4-6), Middle School (5-8), Secondary (7-12).

Appreciation is extended to all educators who submitted ideas or activities for Promising PCRP Practices. Hopefully, this publication will enrich classroom experiences that teachers provide for students.

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PROMISING PCRP PRACTICES FOR CLASSROOM USE

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ACTIVITY

Storytelling (the teacher as reader)

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Oral)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will develop listening skills.

2. The students will enjoy listening to oral reading.

3. The students will discuss the story they have heard and their feelings about the story.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Books, stories, art supplies, soft cushions or relaxing furniture

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Reading of a story: 5 min. - 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

Reading of a story: 5 min. - 30 min.
Creation time: 1 - 2 hours

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher chooses a favorite book or story to read orally.

B. The students listen and follow along as silent readers, if copies of the book or story are available.

C. The teacher may ask students to respond by discussing the book or story.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The students may have a special place set aside in the room for listening to stories.

Padded bathtubs with listening equipment (recorders, headsets) may be used, a rug on the floor in a secluded spot may also be used.

B. The students may want to respond to the book or story in other ways:

1. Making a book poster.

2. Rewriting the story.

3. Drawing a picture of a scene from the book.

4. Cutting pieces of an original scene for a puzzle.

5. Bringing in stuffed animals to represent any story characters.

C. The students may want to contract to read certain books.

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ACTIVITY

Book Sharing

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Oral)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students have an opportunity to share information about a book (orally and/or through an art experience).

2. The students have an opportunity to express their feelings about a book (orally and/or through an art experience).

MATERIALS

Paper, pencils, art supplies

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class (possibly in small groups)

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

May vary from 15 minutes to 1 hour

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

As a speaker: 5 minutes
As a listener: 15 minutes to 1 hour
Preparation for book sharing: Unlimited time

DESCRIPTION

The teacher introduces the book sharing activity to the group in the following manner:

A. The student and teacher participate in a discussion of the purpose of book sharing and the possible ways books may be shared.

B. The teacher may display a chart listing different ideas for book sharing.

C. The students participate in the book sharing experience by orally and/or visually presenting the books to the entire class or to small groups.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The teacher, working together with the art teacher, may set up a learning center (of supplies) for students to use in creating visual aids.

B. The teacher and student may schedule appropriate times for students to work independently or in small groups at the learning center to create an individualized art project.

1. Students may design puppets for a puppet show (possibly, with music).

2. Students may wish to originate props and costumes for a play presentation.

3. A student may wish to make a mozaic picture of a favorite scene from a story.

4. A student may wish to create a corn-husk doll.

C. If two students have read the same book, they may choose to conduct an interview (perhaps, dressing in costumes) to role play the characters in the book.

D. The students may share books illustrated by famous illustrators.

1. A student may explain the different techniques illustrators use.

2. A student may become an illustrator by designing an illustration for the book sharing.

E. The teacher may share the students' projects by arranging a table and/or bulletin board of student displays.

A teacher may use the bulletin board theme: "Reading - Your Ticket to Everywhere".

F. The teacher may have a "parade" of book characters with students wearing costumes they have created.

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ACTIVITY

Responding to Poetry

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Oral and Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will have the opportunity to read poetry for meaning and fun.

2. The students will have the opportunity to copy and illustrate poems.

3. The students will have the opportunity to create oral and written poetry.

4. The students will have the opportunity to appreciate rhyme and/or rhythm in poetry.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Poems, poetry books, other books and stories, paper, drawing materials

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

As a reader: 5 min. - 20 min.
As a facilitator: 15 min. - 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

As a reader: 5 min. - 20 min.
As a presenter: 5 min. - 20 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. As the teacher reads a poem the students create mental pictures of the poem.

B. The teacher and students discuss visual images created while listening to the poetry.

C. The students illustrate the poems they have heard.

D. The teacher and students identify and discuss various words (possibly, rhyming words) within the poem.

E. The teacher and students identify rhyme and/or rhythm after reading a poem.

F. The teacher and students may create an original poem.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The teacher may read a poem aloud with the students (choral reading).

(1) The students in small groups may recite a poem to another group or class.

(2) A student may recite a printed or original poem to the rest of the class or to a small group.

B. The teacher may sing a poem or play a poetry record in order to acquaint students with rhyming words.

C. The students may substitute and/or supplement original words (possibly rhyming) in a poem.

D. The students may write a poem with each line on a separate sheet of paper to form a poetry booklet.

The students may illustrate each line of poetry on a separate sheet of paper.

E. The students may create their own poem and act it out for the rest of the class.

F. After reading poems, the students may write another verse (possibly about a main character from the poem).

G. The teacher may display students' poems and/or poetry booklets.

The teacher, with the help of other teachers, may establish a Writers' Club with a poetry section.

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ACTIVITY

Dramatizing (Play Acting)

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Oral and Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will have an opportunity to participate and cooperate with a group of peers.

2. The students will have an opportunity to write a play.

3. The students will have an opportunity to express themselves orally using a written script.

4. The students will have an opportunity to practice self-evaluation.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Books, stories, transparencies, slide frames, tape recorder, blank tapes, videotape, and any needed play props

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

1. Reading of a story: 5 min. - 30 min.
2. Taping of a play: Up to 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

1. Reading of a story: 5 min. - 30 min.
2. Play preparation time: 1 hr. - 2 hrs.
3. Performance time: 30 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher, with the help of the librarian, may introduce particular books or stories to the students. The students may write a play based on the books or stories the teacher has read to them or based on books or stories they have read.

B. The teacher may assist students in writing the original script and in performing the play.

C. The students may read the script or memorize the script for presentation of the play.

D. The teacher may videotape the play and set up guidelines with students for self evaluation.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The students may choose to develop a movie using the contents of a favorite book or story.

B. The students may record their favorite book or story and create a filmstrip to accompany the recording.

By cutting transparencies to fit slide frames, the students may write and/or draw a story summary.

C. The students may plan a television show based on a favorite book or story.

D. The students may design dioramas based on favorite books or stories.

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ACTIVITY

Dramatizing (Role Playing)

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing - Oral)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will interpret the point of view of others through role playing, and grow in understanding of the feelings of others.

2. The students will develop confidence and feelings of self-esteem through oral experiences.

3. The students will express orally the content of a story they have read.

NUMBER of STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Books, stories, pictures, drawing materials

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

1. Reading of the story: 10 min. - 30 min.
2. Role playing: 5 min. for each group - up to 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

1. Reading of the story: 10 min. - 30 min.
2. Practice time: Up to 20 min.
3. Presentation time: Up to 5 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher discusses the concept of feelings with the students.

B. The teacher and the students discuss feelings that may be felt by the characters in a story which has been read by the class.

C. The teacher asks for student volunteers to "role play" particular story characters.

D. The teacher and students further discuss some of the feelings felt by the characters in the story as the role playing may have clarified the feelings and the reasons for these feelings.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS for IMPLEMENTATION

A. The teacher may substitute pictures, in place of a story, to act as a catalyst for student role playing.

B. The teacher may suggest playing a riddle game in which a student describes or role plays a main character and others in the room try to identify the character.

Using cardboard, a student may draw a body representing the main story character leaving a hole for the face which will allow the student to visually become the character.

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ACTIVITY

Writing Story Endings

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will have an opportunity to hear and discuss a story read by the teacher.

2. The students will have an opportunity to write an original ending for a story.

3. The students will have an opportunity to read the story endings aloud.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Stories, writing materials
Tape recorders (optional)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

As a reader: 10 min. - 30 min.
As a participant: 10 min. - 20 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

As a listener: 10 min. - 30 min.
As a writer: 10 min. - 20 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher reads a story to the students omitting the ending of the story.

B. The teacher and students discuss possible endings to the story.

C. The student, with the help of the teacher, writes an ending to the story.

D. The teacher may ask the students to read the story.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The students may select the story to be read, altering the ending.

B. The teacher may read only the ending of a story and discuss the beginning of the story with the students.

   1. The students may write a beginning to the story.

   2. The students may illustrate the beginning of a story.

C. The teacher may ask the students to write or draw impressions of the story as the story is being read.

D. The teacher may ask a student to tape record story writings.

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ACTIVITY

Outlining

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will have an opportunity to read for a particular purpose.

2. The students will be able to identify main ideas and supporting details.

3. The students will be able to order and write an outline.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Books (possibly content-area texts), newspapers, magazines

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

As an instructor: 30 min. - 60 min.
As a facilitator: 30 min. - 60 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

As a participant: 30 min. - 60 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher and students discuss the main and supporting ideas of an outline.

B. The teacher and students read a particular section or chapter from a book or text.

C. The teacher and students identify and label the main and supporting ideas in the item they have read.

D. The teacher and students develop an outline using the material they have read.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The teacher may ask students to locate and outline specific facts in history, or other content subjects.

B. The teacher may ask students to read current events in a newspaper to identify main ideas and supporting details.

C. The teacher and students may outline specific topics:

Why does popcorn pop?
How does popcorn pop?
What happens to popcorn when it pops?

D. The students may identify and outline the topic of footwear used in particular occupations: who, what, where, when, and why.

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ACTIVITY

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR)

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#2 (SSR)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will practice reading skills through silent reading.
2. The students will achieve a positive attitude toward reading.
3. The students will develop a life-time commitment to reading.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Collection of reading materials ranging in difficulty and on a variety of topics; and if desired, motivational items and a timer

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

10 min. - 40 minutes daily

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

10 min. - 40 minutes daily

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher encourages students to browse among the books in the classroom library to select one of interest.

B. The teacher assists the students, if necessary, in choosing a book of interest or about a particular topic.

C. When students have completed book selections, the teacher announces that SSR will begin.

D. The students and teacher read.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The teacher may post an SSR sign on the door so that no one enters the room during SSR.

B. The teacher might use a bell, a light, or other timing device to signify the end of the SSR period. (A signal should be given to the readers 5 minutes before the close of the SSR period and once again when the period is to end.)

C. The teacher might use a theme such as "bug-off" time and have students read a freely chosen "bug-off" book from the classroom library during the SSR period.

D. The teacher may introduce the SSR period daily by having the students join the SQUIRT Club. SQUIRT (Student Quiet Uninterrupted Reading Time).

E. The teacher may ask parents and students to participate in SSR for 15 minutes at home each night.

   a. SHARP (School Home Assisted Reading Program) is a program where students and parents sign a contract to read at home each night.

   b. The teacher, with special assistance from the principal, may provide the opportunity for parents and students to visit the library for SSR on Family Library Nights.

F. The teacher may work with librarians, other teachers, and content-area supervisors to suggest titles for annotated booklists appropriate for individual students and to provide books for the classroom library.

G. The teacher may want to keep these thoughts in mind:

   a. Thou shalt not talk.
   b. Thou shalt not correct papers.
   c. Thou shalt not write lesson plans.
   d. Thou shalt not exclude any student from SSR.
   e. Thou shalt not end SSR abruptly.
   f. Thou shalt not require feedback or response from students.
   g. Thou shalt not give up without giving SSR a fair trial.
   h. Thou shalt not let students do homework during SSR.
   i. Thou shalt not use SSR time to give individual help in any subject area.
   j. Thou shalt not abuse SSR by scheduling it without some structure.

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ACTIVITY

Sustained Writing (SW)

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#3 (Composing: Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will improve their writing ability.

2. The students will be able to communicate effectively on paper.

3. The students will have an opportunity to creatively express themselves in writing.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Writing materials, pictures

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Preparation time: 15 min. - 20 min.
Participation time: 20 min. - 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

Participation time: 20 min. - 30 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher may introduce sustained writing by showing a picture and having the students write a title for the picture.

B. The teacher and students write original stories using the picture for reference.

C. The teacher and students read the story orally.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The teacher may compose a word list for the students to refer to when writing.

After reading an animal story, the students and teacher may list related words for writing a story.

B. The students may keep a journal composed of daily writings.

The teacher may ask a student to write daily on a particular topic selected by the student or assigned by the teacher.

C. The teacher may have a writing display.

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ACTIVITY

Writing and Following Directions

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#3 (Composing: Oral and Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will be able to communicate sequential ideas orally and in writing.

2. The students will be able to develop directions for another person to follow.

3. The students will develop auditory sequential memory skills related to following directions given orally.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Chalk, paper, pencils

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Preparation time: 5 min. - 15 min.
Participation time: 15 min. - 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

Preparation time: 5 min. - 15 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher and/or students may set up a maze inside or outside of the classroom.

B. A student is asked to compose written directions for another student to follow to complete the maze.

C. A student reads the written directions aloud to another student who tests whether or not the maze can be completed successfully.

D. The teacher and students may discuss the reasons for specific oral and written directions. They may also discuss the reason that a "breakdown" in communication takes place.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A teacher may give directions in writing.

The students may respond to any directions by writing a reply.

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ACTIVITY

Creative Writing - Personal Experiences

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#3 (Composing: Oral and Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will have an opportunity to relate personal experiences.

2. The student will improve writing skills.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Writing materials, literature selections

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

10 min. - 15 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

15 min. - 30 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher and students discuss personal experiences that may be topics for a writing experience.

B. The teacher reads literature selections that focus on personal experiences.

C. The students write about a personal experience.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The students may illustrate their writings.

B. The students with the support of the teacher, may share and/or display their writings.

C. The students may write stories about themselves (possibly, renaming themselves). The students may create pictures of themselves as "Very Important People". (VIP)

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ACTIVITY

Word Meaning Activities

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#4 (Investigating and Mastering Language Patterns: Sound/Spelling and Word Meanings)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

The students will develop basic sight vocabulary for familiar words in the school and neighborhood environment.

NUMBER of STUDENTS

Entire class or groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary

MATERIALS

Tape recorder, writing materials (optional: art materials)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

30 min. - 40 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

30 min. - 40 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher and students walk around the neighborhood and school.

B. The teacher asks the students to point out all the words they see on street signs, stores, cards, and other places as they are walking.

C. The teacher teaches the students to use a tape recorder.

D. The teacher asks the students to read the familiar words into a tape recorder.

E. The teacher and students listen to the tape.

F. The teacher, with the help of the students, write all the words on the board.

G. The students practice reading the words as sight words.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS for IMPLEMENTATION

A. The teacher and students may plan to visit a supermarket to learn particular categories of sight words: fruits, vegetables, meats, etc.

B. After a field trip to the supermarket, the students may want to make an art project for a reading activity. The students may want to make faces on vegetables, by painting or cutting features into the vegetables and then permitting the vegetables to dry.

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ACTIVITY

Writing Sentences

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#4 (Investigating and Mastering Language Patterns: Syntax)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will be able to identify a sentence orally and in print.

2. The students will be able to order words correctly into a written sentence.

3. The students will be able to write sentences using varied parts of speech.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Intermediate

MATERIALS

Books, writing materials

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

As an instructor: 15 min. - 20 min.
As a participant: 15 min. - 20 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME

As a participant: 15 min. - 50 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher and students discuss the meaning of a sentence.

B. The teacher and students identify some examples of sentences.

C. The teacher and students write some simple sentences.

D. The teacher explains some or all parts of speech to the students (noun, verb, adjective, adverb).

E. The students, with the help of the teacher, label particular parts of speech in a sentence they have written.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The students may unscramble words or parts of sentences to write correctly ordered sentences.

B. The students may construct sentences about an object or picture. The students may express feelings about a painting in correct sentence form.

C. The students may categorize particular parts of speech in sentences by writing words in appropriate lists which are labeled with the names of the particular parts of speech.

D. The teacher may ask the students to create a sentence with specific parts of speech.

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ACTIVITY

Spelling Game - Beginning Sounds

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#4 (Investigating and Mastering Language Patterns: Sound/Symbol Relationships)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will be more proficient in recognizing beginning sounds.

2. The students will improve their spelling and reading skills.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Small groups or individuals

GRADE LEVELS

Primary

MATERIALS

Painted or covered soup cans labeled with consonant blends or digraphs, a box containing pictures with beginning sounds that start with the sounds presented on the cans

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

10 minutes

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

5 min. - 20 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher demonstrates how the small cards can be placed in the cans by sound/symbol category.

B. The student categorizes the small pictures by placing them into the appropriate marked cans.

C. The student performs the activity individually or in small groups with standard for performance being correct placement of cards and possibly shortest amount of time for categorization.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. A student may check another student for correct placement of cards.

B. A student may use a timer for individual game practice or may ask another student to keep time.

C. The teacher and/or student may design a similar game for vowels, syllables, prefixes, suffixes or rhyming words by changing the labels on the cans.

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ACTIVITY

Spelling Game - The Alphabet and Words

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#4 (Investigating and Mastering Language Patterns: Sound/Symbol Relationships)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will improve their spelling skills.

2. The students will increase their vocabularies.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class, small groups, individuals

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Writing materials, dictionary, (optional: scissors)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

10 minutes

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

15 min. - 25 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. A student, with the help of the teacher, folds a piece of paper to form small squares.

B. The teacher dictates letters (consonants, vowels, digraphs, blends).

C. A student writes each of the dictated letters in one square on the paper.

D. A student (possibly, with a partner) forms words using the letters in the squares and a dictionary.

E. The student writes the words.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The teacher may help the students fold the paper to form squares (perhaps, one-inch squares).

B. The teacher may ask the students for letters to be dictated.

C. The students may cut the paper with the letters into individual squares.

D. The students may write their own letters in the squares.

E. The students may time themselves or another student in completing the task. (A competition - the greatest number of words in the shortest interval of time).

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ACTIVITY

Spelling Game - Word Bingo

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#4 (Investigating and Mastering Language Patterns: Sound/Symbol Relationships)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will have the opportunity to practice "spelling" words.

2. The students will improve spelling and reading skills.

NUMBER of STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

Spelling list, graph paper, word markers (possibly, macaroni)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

15 min. - 20 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

15 min. - 20 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The students, with the help of the teacher, make a "game board" on graph paper.

   The gameboard has the same number of squares horizontally and vertically. (Possibly, a "Bingo" card may be used as a sample.)

B. The students write a "spelling" word in each square.

C. The teacher dictates spelling words to the students.

D. The students mark (possibly, using macaroni) the word that is dictated if it is written on their card.

E. The teacher continues to dictate words to the students until one student marks an entire row of words on the card.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS for IMPLEMENTATION

A. The student who has marked an entire row of words has "Bingo" and may correctly spell the words out loud.

B. The student and teacher may design additional rules of the game if it is necessary to correct misspelled words.

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ACTIVITY

Spelling Game - Scrabble

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#4 (Investigating and Mastering Language Patterns: Sound/Symbol Relationships)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will have the opportunity to practice spelling skills.

2. The students will improve spelling and reading skills.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Primary/Intermediate

MATERIALS

List of spelling words, pencils, graph paper

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

As an instructor: 10 min. - 15 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

30 min. - 40 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher distributes the materials necessary for the activity.

B. The teacher provides the students with the game directions:

   1. Choose a word from the spelling list.

   2. Print the word that is chosen in the middle of the graph paper using one block for each letter of the word.

   3. Choose a second word from the spelling list that has a letter that is the same as one in the first word.

   4. Print each letter of the second word in a square beginning with the letter that matches the one in the word on the graph paper. (If the first word is printed horizontally, the second one will be printed vertically, or vice versa.)

5. Print other spelling words that can be attached to the word design (without putting letters side by side, unless the letters placed side by side spell a word.)

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The students may place a check mark next to the words on the spelling list that have been used in the word design.

B. The students may make the design in the shape of some object.

C. The students may draw around their word designs or cut the designs out to complete any desired shape.

D. The students may display their word designs.

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ACTIVITY

Writing Across the Curriculum

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Oral and Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will understand the importance of writing.

2. The students will foster a positive attitude toward writing.

3. The students will become acquainted with resource writing materials available for writing improvement.

4. The students will have the opportunity to practice writing skills in the "content" areas.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Secondary

MATERIALS

Content-area texts, resource materials, writing materials.

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

20 min. - 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

As a participant in discussions: 20 min. - 30 min.
As a writer: 15 min. - 30 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher and students discuss the need for writing improvement.

B. The teacher and students discuss the need for writing frequently.

C. The teacher and students discuss methods and materials to improve writing skills.

D. The teacher provides the students with an opportunity to write in the "content" areas.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The teacher may invite other faculty members to come into the classroom to provide instruction in specific areas of the curriculum.

B. The teacher may ask students to research "content" areas for writing about a subject that interests them.

C. The teacher may use audio-visual aids for the motivation of writing.

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ACTIVITY

Responding to Poetry

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Oral and Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will have the opportunity to read poetry.

2. The students will have the opportunity to discuss the meanings of a poem.

3. The students will have the opportunity to write poetry.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Middle School/Secondary

MATERIALS

Poems, poetry books, other books, writing materials

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

15 min. - 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

As a participant: 15 min. - 30 min.
As a writer: 10 min. - 30 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher and students read a poem.

B. The teacher and students discuss the possible meanings of the poem.

C. The teacher and students choose topics for poetry writing.

D. The teacher and students read/share some poems (or stories) on the topics.

E. The students write their own poems.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The teacher and students may discuss words (possibly, rhyming words or the history of words) within a poem.

B. The students may share their poem with the class.

C. The students may create a poetry book of their own poems.

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ACTIVITY

Writing Story Endings

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will have the opportunity to read and discuss a story.

2. The students will have the opportunity to write an original ending for a story.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Middle School/Secondary

MATERIALS

Literature, writing materials, (optional: comics)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

10 min. - 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

As a discussion participant: 15 min - 20 min.
As a writer: 15 min. - 30 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher and students read a story omitting the ending of the story.

B. The teacher and students discuss possible endings to the story.

C. The teacher and students write an ending to the story.

D. The students write their own endings to a story.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The students may write an ending for a comic.
The students may want to compare their version with the original ending for the comic strip.

B. The students may create a comic strip for a story being read.

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ACTIVITY

Letter Writing

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will read to become acquainted with authors.

2. The students will have the opportunity to express their feelings to an author.

3. The students will be able to write letters.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class

GRADE LEVELS

Middle School/Secondary

MATERIALS

Books, writing materials

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

As an instructor: 15 min. - 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

15 min. - 45 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher and students will name and discuss favorite authors of books they have read.

B. The teacher and students will review letter writing.

C. The students will write a letter to an author about a book. (Several drafts of the letter may be necessary before the final draft is written.)

D. The teacher helps the students improve the letter until the final draft has been developed.

E. The students, with the encouragement of the teacher, send the letter to the author.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. In their letter, the students may include questions to the author about a particular book.

B. The teacher and students may display or share any responses received from an author.

C. The student, with the support of the teacher, may invite the author to visit the school.

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ACTIVITY

Working with Newspapers

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will increase their commitment to reading.

2. The students will be interested in reading a newspaper (perhaps, daily).

3. The students will read a newspaper for a specific purpose.

4. The students will be discriminating readers.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Middle School/Secondary

MATERIALS

Newspaper, writing materials

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

15 min. - 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

15 min. - 30 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher and students examine and discuss the section of a newspaper.

B. The teacher and students discuss the purposes of a newspaper.

C. The teacher and students read and discuss articles and identify the purpose for which each article may have been written.

D. The teacher and students discuss the importance of being an objective and/or critical reader.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The students may design the front page or another section of a newspaper (perhaps for a particular period of history).

B. The students may write a letter to the newspaper or to a columnist.

C. The students with the teacher may learn concepts related to Math, Consumerism, Social Studies, Language Arts and other curricular areas when they study the newspaper.

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ACTIVITY

Rorshach Test Technique

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#1 (Responding to Literature)
#3 (Composing: Oral and Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

The students will experience the point of view of both an author and character.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class and/or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Secondary

MATERIALS

Literature selections, ink, porous paper, writing materials

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Preparation time: As individually needed
Instructional time: 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

As a reader: 1 hr. - 3 hrs.
As a participant: 30 min. - 1 hr.

DESCRIPTION

A. The students read a variety of literature that may range from The Secret Life of Walter Mitty to the novel Crime and Punishment.

B. The teacher explains the Rorshach test technique.

C. The students create a Rorshach ink blot using ink and a folded piece of yellow tablet paper.

D. The creator of the ink blot and two other students write first-person responses to the ink blot as if they were a character in the literature read.

DESCRIPTION (continued)

E. The students share the written responses orally in small groups.

F. The students discuss their ability to maintain the first-person point of view.

G. The students revise and recopy reports, as necessary.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

DREAM CREATION: The students read Raskolnikov's first two dreams and invent a dream which he might have after the murder.

a. Examine the events and symbols in the two dreams which Dostoevsky created.
b. Discuss the article on dreams from The Writer.
c. Draft a dream which incorporates some of the details from Raskolnikov's environment and from the scene of the murder.
d. Share the drafts and respond to them.
e. Revise and share with the class.
f. Conference with teacher. Compare dream with Dostoevsky's and with classmates.

ANALYTICAL ESSAY: The class will reread the four dreams which Dostoevsky created for Raskolnikov and discuss similarities and contrasts.

a. What events precede each dream?
b. What happens in each dream?
c. What are the symbols in each dream?
d. What parallels relate all four dreams?
e. In partnerships, compare notes.
f. Draft a thesis.
g. Write an introductory paragraph. Share it with a classmate and the teacher.
h. Revise the opening paragraph.
i. Write the first complete draft. Share it with two classmates.
j. Conference with teacher.
k. Write final draft.

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ACTIVITY

Monologue Writing

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#3 (Composing: Oral and Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will have an opportunity to express themselves orally and in writing.

2. The students will achieve a positive attitude toward speaking and writing.

3. The students will develop an understanding of the use of the monologue in literature and the media.

NUMBER of STUDENTS

Small groups and/or entire class

GRADE LEVELS

Secondary

MATERIALS

Tape recorder, writing materials, monologues from classroom anthologies and texts

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

As an instructor: 10 min. - 15 min.
As a listener: 15 min. - 30 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

As a speaker: 5 min. - 15 min.
As a listener: 15 min. - 30 min.
As a writer: 15 min. - 30 min.

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher and students discuss the term "monologue" and the students' experiences with monologues on radio and television.

B. The teacher and students read several monologues that are included in classroom anthologies and texts.

C. The students listen to original monologues developed orally by class members.

D. The students write a monologue.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS for IMPLEMENTATION

A. The students may play a tape-recorded monologue so that other students may listen.

B. The student may record and/or write a monologue adapting a point of view from another person or favorite author.

C. A student may discuss the meaning of a monologue that is read to the class.

D. A student may ask for reaction to a monologue from an audience.

E. The student may develop monologues from a schema in which they have listed topics of interest, experiences, and attitudes.

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ACTIVITY

Journal Writing

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#3 (Composing: Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will have an opportunity to express their feelings in daily writings.

2. The students will improve their writing skills.

3. The students may be motivated to write.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire Class

GRADE LEVELS

Middle School/Secondary

MATERIALS

Writing materials, sample journals

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

As an instructor: 10 min. - 15 min.
As a participant: 5 min. - 15 min.

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

As a participant in the discussion: 10 min. - 15 min.
As a writer: 5 min. - 15 min.

DESCRIPTION:

A. The teacher and students discuss what a journal is and the purpose of a journal.

B. The teacher and students read and discuss sample journal entries.

C. The student, with the teacher's help, if necessary, write daily journal entries (for five days).

D. The students keep a daily journal throughout the school year.

E. The teacher writes when the students write.

F. The teacher provides journal-writing time.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. After having an experience inside or outside of school such as a movie or play, a student may write journal entries to describe the situation or a character.

B. The teacher may suggest that the students write journal entries about an imagined experience -- such as ten days stranded on an island.

C. The students may want to design a journal cover and journal illustrations.

D. The students who complete their journal entries before the allotted time are instructed to copy something such as a poem or paragraph from a textbook.

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ACTIVITY

Historical Interviews

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#3 (Composing: Oral and Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will develop an understanding of local history.
2. The students will develop an understanding of world events.
3. The students will develop and improve interviewing and writing skills.
4. The students will develop an understanding of others.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class and/or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Intermediate/Secondary

MATERIALS

Writing materials

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

45 minutes

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

1-3 hours

DESCRIPTION

A. The students will identify "key" historical events (Crash of 1929, World War II, The Depression).

B. The students will identify someone to interview who lived during the time period identified.

C. The teacher and students will discuss interviewing skills and techniques.

D. The students will schedule interviews by telephone, in person, and/or through written correspondence.

E. The students will develop interview questions.

F. The students will rehearse interview techniques with each other.

G. The students will conduct the interview with the person selected and contacted.

H. The students will write a letter of appreciation to the person interviewed.

I. The students will share the interviews with each other orally and/or in writing.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The students may compare what life was like for ancestors, for people in a foreign country and for people of minority races and religions.

B. The students may compare family histories.

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ACTIVITY

Local History Project

CRITICAL EXPERIENCE

#3 (Composing: Oral and Written)

STUDENT OUTCOMES

1. The students will develop an understanding of local history.

2. The students will develop an appreciation of architecture of the past.

3. The students will learn to share and cooperate with peers when participating as a group member in a local history project.

4. The students will develop and use a card file "data base."

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

Entire class and/or small groups

GRADE LEVELS

Intermediate/Secondary

MATERIALS

Local artifacts, local-written history, camera (slide, if possible), writing materials, card file

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

Approximately two weeks

STUDENT INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY TIME (Engagement Time)

Segments of a two week time period, as scheduled by the teacher

DESCRIPTION

A. The teacher provides an understanding of the architecture of homes in the community built during a specific time period (discussions, illustrations of such features as Victorian gingerbread, use of tin roofs, use of stone walls, use of small lites in windows, number of fireplaces).

B. The teacher and students discuss local homes, list the characteristics of these homes, and try to identify the period of time in which these homes were built.

C. The teachers and students schedule field trips to visit sites of these homes to study and/or photograph the homes.

D. The students organize the information gathered into a "data base" and then write compositions and give talks using the "data base." The "data base" is a card file category of written information and photographs about the homes.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. The students, with the help of the teacher, may develop bulletin board displays of pictures, diagrams, and compositions.

B. The students may prepare booklets.

C. The students, with the help of the teacher, may present assembly programs.

Contributed by:

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West York Area School District
York, PA 17404

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

PCRP activity booklets that may be available on request, have been developed by the following:

Composing: Oral and Written
Marion Center School District
Marion Center, PA 15759
Telephone: (412) 397-5551
Contact: George Hood, Elementary Principal

CARES PROJECT
Intermediate Unit I
(Fayette - Greene - Washington)
1148 Wood Street
California, PA 15419
Telephone: (412) 938-3241
Contact: Jean Roach, CARES Satellite Director

PCRP book lists that may be available on request, have been developed by the following:

Irene Shillington, Language Arts Coordinator
Haverford Township School District
1801 East Darby Road
Havertown, PA 19083
Telephone: (215) 446-4570 (Ext. 309 or 249)

Englebright, Curtis. Instructor.
"61 Way to Tell About Books"
November 1969, pgs. 70-71.

(Suggested by: Christopher Mare, Reading Supervisor
State College Area School District
State College, PA 16801)